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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Grass Roots Horse, Inc. is pleased to announce they have been awarded 501(c)3 non-profit tax-exempt status retroactive from September 15, 2010. Based in citizen action and community involvement, they are an equine welfare and mustang advocacy group whose mission is to affect positive change for horses, mules, and donkeys wherever needed.

“The world in some aspects is becoming a smaller place with new forms of communication being developed all the time,” said Maureen VanDerStad of Grass Roots Horse. “It is a national and global community, and these new forms of communication are creating some exciting new options for coordinating advocacy on a grass roots level. We began as a group of individuals wishing to take quantifiable, measurable steps for the wild horses and burros and to educate ourselves and the public on this issue.”

The wild horses and burros are being removed from public lands at an aggressive rate and the interested public is often denied access to report on the welfare, well-being and whereabouts of these animals that congress intended to be protected from harassment and to remain free-roaming on the public lands that were set aside for them by the Free Roaming Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971.

There is extensive work needing to be done on behalf of the horses and burros on many different levels, so there is place and a need for interested citizens to become involved and to be of service. One of the Grass Roots Horse programs that allows for a hands-on experience is Herd Watch™, whose objective is to educate the public on the government process, and more importantly, how to utilize this education to be an effective advocate. This is a citizen science, history, equine welfare, and environmental education project that documents and catalogs specific information on the wild horses and burros on our public lands, as well as the health of the land itself. The information is gathered and then entered into a multi-tiered database that will allow any interested party to access and share the information to advocate on behalf of the animals and the health of our public lands. The database will have the ability to find links among data from multiple sources that are pertinent to each specific herd and herd management area. By using a multi-tiered system, we are able to add new software applications into the system as new technologies are developed.

Another Grass Roots Horse initiative is live streaming video from wild horse roundups as well as from any other locations that are of interest to the public on this issue. Herd Watch™ also uses research and education as key components, so the ability to reach the public from this platform and engage them in what is happening is a huge breakthrough.

The public has often been denied access to meaningful views of the wild horses and burros starting from moments before the capture to their ultimate destination. To affect positive change by asking for full access and accountability on the captured wild horses, the organization is supporting the legal actions of journalist, Laura Leigh, whose First Amendment lawsuit is at present awaiting a ruling by federal Judge Larry Hicks in Nevada.

All donations to Grass Roots Horse, Inc. are tax deductible and the organization is allowed to accept donations of bequests, as well as both real and intellectual property. To learn more about this organization and its initiatives, or to make a donation, please visit [www.grassrootshorse.com](http://www.grassrootshorse.com) . If you would like to volunteer or receive information, please contact [info@grassrootshorse.com](mailto:info@grassrootshorse.com)